

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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City Public Works Department Recommends Recovery and Rebuilding Steps

During Monday's rain event, City of Houston Public Works and Engineering crews worked with the Houston Fire Department to rescue stranded citizens from rising floodwaters. Today, as the floodwaters recede, the Public Works and Engineering Department continues to offer its guidance and assistance to citizens working to repair their flood-damaged homes.

Public Works officials recommend that citizens who have sustained flood damage first contact their insurance carrier and report the loss. The more quickly a damage claim is filed, the more quickly a citizen can come to a settlement with his or her insurer and begin restoration work.

Before restoration work can begin, a determination must be made whether the work requires a building permit to be issued to the property owner by the City of Houston Planning and Development Department. Citizens or contractors can contact the Planning and Development Department at 713-535-7500 or go by their locations at 3300 Main, 5325 Dacoma or 3915 Rustic Woods for further information.

During the process of issuing a building permit, the Planning and Development Department will make a determination whether the subject property lies within the 100-year flood plain. If the property does not lie within the boundaries of the flood plain, then a building permit may be issued immediately. If the property is found to be within the flood plain, then the property owner or contractor must visit the Public Works and Engineering Department Flood Plain Management Office located at 3300 Main to obtain a determination whether the property is substantially damaged. A home is substantially damaged if the cost of repairs exceed 50 percent of the value of the property, minus the value of the land. If a home is found to be substantially damaged, then the property owner must comply with further requirements before the building permit will be issued. For details concerning these additional requirements, the Flood Plain Management Office can be contacted at 713-535-7615 or 713-535-7666. If the property is not found to be substantially damaged, then the building permit may be issued as usual.

Newly flood-damaged homes located in the flood plain, along with those in the flood plain that also suffered damage during Tropical Storm Allison, may qualify for a buyout plan sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the Harris County Flood Control District. Citizens interested in a potential buyout of their property should contact the Harris County Flood Control District at 713-684-4020 or 713-684-4035.

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